

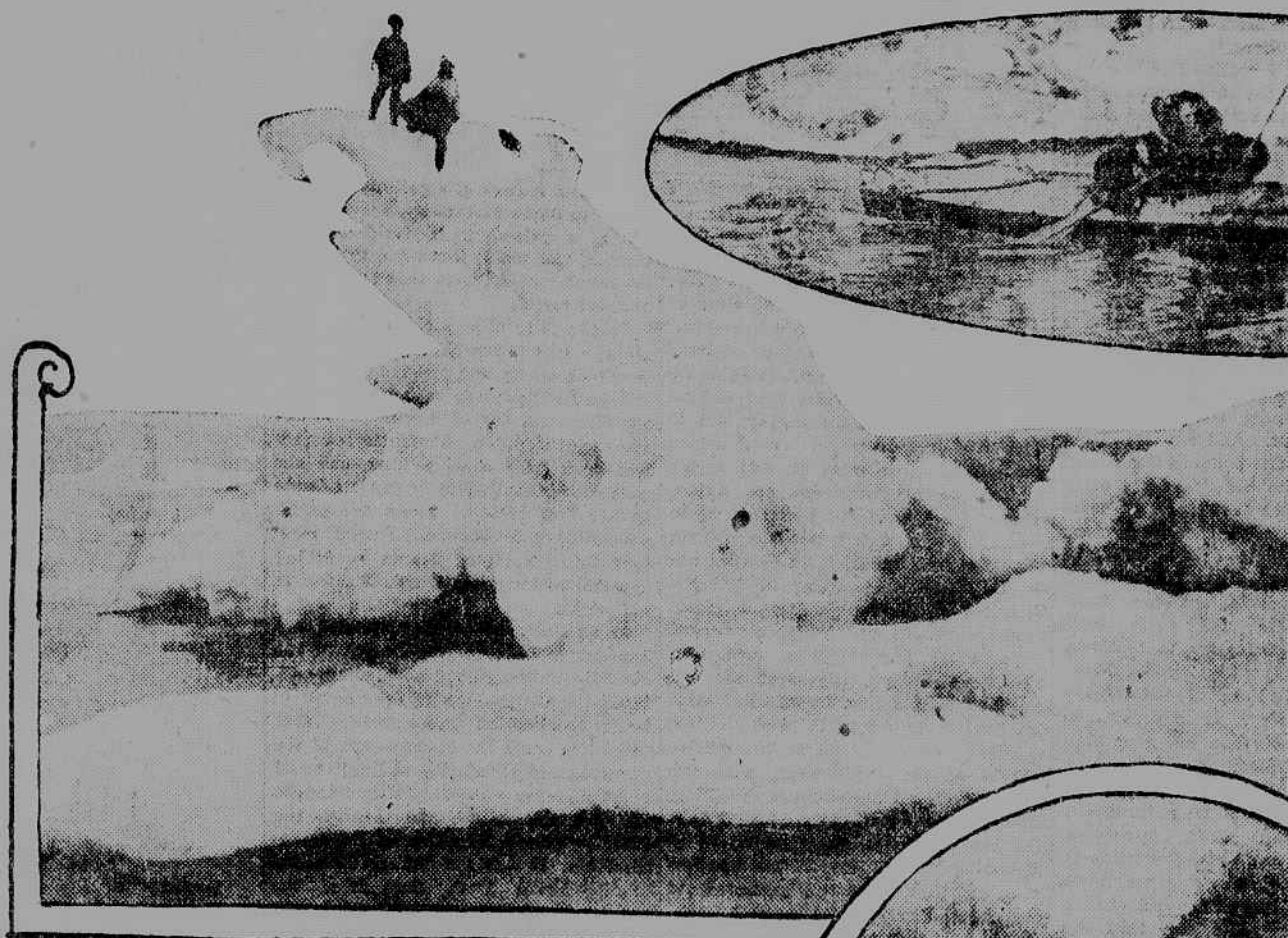
BRINGING HOME THE ESQUIMAU BACON

By CAPTAIN F. E. KLEINSCHMIDT

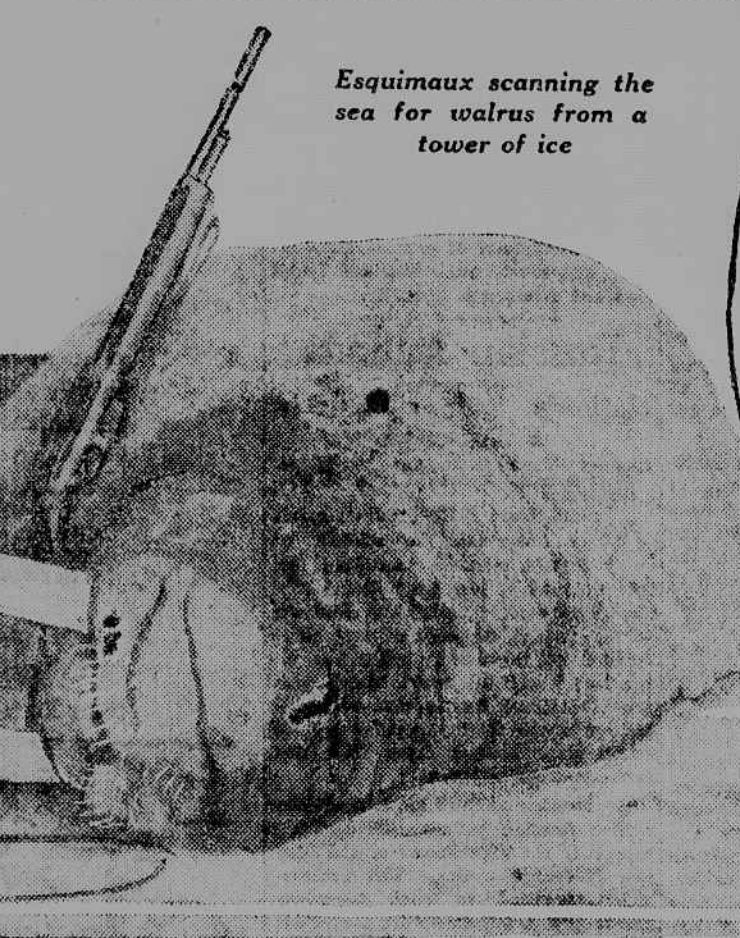
HAVE you ever seen a Walrus? No? Of course you never have! Strange, is it not? The zoo and the circus have almost every animal from the remotest corners of the globe, yet there isn't a walrus in captivity to-day. To the old Vikings the walrus were the goblin monsters that infested the Arctic seas, and many sagas were spun about them. One of these early Arctic voyagers, Albertus Magnus, who died in 1280, gives us the first description of a walrus hunt. After describing the fearful aspect and the almost supernatural powers of the monster, he says: "The walrus is taken by the hunters while the sleeping animal hangs by its large tusks to a cleft in the rock in the mountains. The hunter steals up to the sleeping animal, cuts out a piece of its skin and fastens to it a strong rope, whose other end is tied to a tree, post or large rings fastened in the rocks. The walrus is then awakened by throwing large stones on its head. In its attempt to escape it leaves its hide behind. It perishes soon after or is thrown half dead on the beach, where it is then easily overcome."

I have often taken hunting parties into the Arctic after walrus, and upon our return, when reading of their adventures in the papers, Albertus Magnus, I realized, had nothing on them. Now science has given us the motion picture camera, and my errand was to bring back to civilization a record of this least known animal imprinted on the celluloid.

The habitat of the Pacific walruses during the months from November until May is the southern part of Bering Sea from the mouth of Bristol Bay to the Aleutian Islands. When the ice begins to melt and recedes into the Arctic they follow the edge of the pack on their annual migration into the Arctic. They have no more home than rabbits, but lie on the ice-floes, leading a lazy and stupid life. The Esquimaux along the coast intercept them in the spring and hunt them in their skin boats as the herds drift past their villages, for the walrus is one of their mainstays. The skin, which is from two to three inches thick, is split and forms the coverings of boat, roofs of houses and soles for boots. The blubber is his "Standard oil," illuminating and heating his igloo in the winter. The meat is food for man



Hunting walrus in an Esquimau kyack or skin boat is risky business. The chances of taking an icy bath are excellent



Esquimaux scanning the sea for walrus from a tower of ice



Many mouths must be fed on walrus meat. Here are two of the prettiest

Just an idea of the size of a walrus. The skin of this bull, upon the author's return to Seattle, though it had been three months in salt, still weighed 1,074 pounds

and dogs. The entrails, blown up and dried, are made into kamalinks or raincoats, floats for nets, substitutes for panes of glass.

The ivory tusks in former days were used in place of metal for weapons and household articles. Now they are made into curios for the white man to buy. The walrus lives exclusively on clams which he digs from the bottom of the Arctic Ocean with his ivory tusks, the bristles on his upper lip, no doubt, serving him as feelers or antennae to distinguish the clams in the murky depths.

Their hearing is not keen. I have talked in ordinary tones within fifty feet of them and ground the motion picture machine. The walrus has no external ear, only a small hole. His eyesight also is so poor that he cannot distinguish a human being within fifty feet. The eyes, made for light under water, cannot bear the sunlight, and he keeps them mostly closed, but when scared he can pop them out of his head and roll them in a most uncanny manner, and with his gleaming ivory tusks and bristled snout, he has a truly prehistoric appearance.

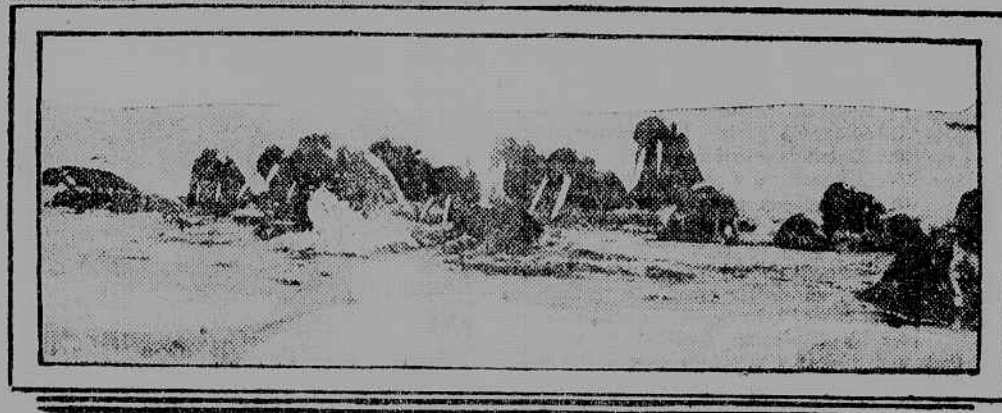
Like the elephant, the walrus must be killed instantly with a shot through the brain, otherwise he will roll off the ice and be lost. His other animal in the eye, and you would penetrate the brain; not so the walrus. The skull is elongated and divided into two parts. The front part is a colossal mass of bone with two cups, into which the ivory tusks fit. The rear part, also a heavy mass of bone, incloses the brain, which is not larger than a man's fist. The hunter must draw an imaginary line fifteen inches from the snout and three inches from the top to strike the brain. Once I had out some Philadelphia hunters (I can't call them sportsmen), and they wounded and maimed seventy-five animals before they were able to get twelve, because they were not able to hit the brain.

The temperament of the walrus differs just as in other animals, according to the individual, season of the year and sex. Bulls during the rutting season will often attack a boat without provocation, while in August and September they are the least dangerous. Hunting them in the frail skin boats of the Esquimaux is a great sport in the Arctic, and I have had a number of fights with them, but when you have hunted them long enough to understand them you find that, like other animals, either fighting among themselves or fighting man nine cases out of ten is a bluff. I have numerous times had a score of them charge my little skin boat in the most hair-raising manner, and I have calmly taken their pictures. They would come snorting and

bellowing, churning the water within five feet of the boat, then suddenly dive and come up again fifty feet away, repeating this maneuver a number of times. The uninitiated will fire into them, seeking refuge on the nearest ice floe and call it an attack. I have seen the walrus attack a skin boat and rip it open. I have had my own kyacks ripped open and swamped, and I have barely escaped to an ice floe, but in every instance it was a single walrus.

The sun was just peeping over the Cape Mountains and dying through the pinnacles of the high pressure ridges with a soft morning glow as we paddled among the dripping ice floes and saw Kit-sen-nas Omiak landing on a high floe and two men ascending what looked like the grotesque trunk of an ice elephant. Soon we heard them calling: "Kata-chi-la!" which is my Esquimau name, and means Bullet Hole in the Head, on account of a deep scar in my right temple.

Scarcely a breath of wind stirred the sea. The Esquimau called my attention to some ice floes in the distance that looked like broken shore ice with rubbish on its surface. When I brought the glass to bear upon it I saw that it was walrus and shouted to the men in the boats: "Ivak-amelucktuk!" (Walrus—plenty!) We rushed to the boats, and just in time, for in a few minutes the top-heavy iceberg turned over. The Esquimaux sent the



Scared off the ice, they came up blowing and snorting. With their gleaming tusks, their bristly snouts and great rolling eyes, they have an uncanny prehistoric appearance

skin boat foaming through the water, and in a half hour we neared the first herd of walrus lying half asleep on a low pan of ice. As we neared the floe the walrus stirred, and the air was vibrant with roars. I could have taken a moving picture of them there and then, but experience had taught me to let the Indian have his fill first; besides the Shanman, or medicine man, had told Okback I was bad luck with my black box and he would get no walrus. Okback therefore looked well pleased when I pulled my 30-40 Winchester from its scabbard and filled the magazine. We now paddled cautiously against the wind toward a herd of fifty to sixty sleeping walrus. They were all bulls, easily distinguished from the

cows by their heavy tusks. We were within fifty yards when a great bull in the center reared himself on his foreflippers, and, swaying the colossal front part of his body from side to side, glared at us and uttered his tremendous bellow. Instantly we lay motionless and the Esquimau imitated him with as deep a bass as they could muster, but puny in comparison. Still, it seemed to satisfy his majesty. He lowered his head and we stealthily crept nearer.

The starboard side and half of the port took in their paddles and reached for their rifles. The boat was now broadside to the floe. We all shifted to port, listing her over so much that we and all our movements were

completely hidden from view. We sculled thus broadside toward them, my heart beating like a triphammer. We drifted close. One giant bull with his head near the water all at once arose and stared at us. Okback gave a grunt and instantly each rifle roared. The gigantic forms on the ice were instantly all commotion, rearing and throwing themselves forward with a peculiar lumbering, hunching movement. Those near the water, lying flat on their backs, would roll over and over like huge sausages and plunge into the sea.

In the center above the rest rose the big bull. As I threw my rifle around to aim for the side of his head I saw a ball hit him right. I could see the force with which it hit, slowing him up, but not stopping him. I drew the bead of my Winchester under his throat as he now faced me, and when I fired saw a stream of blood gushing from the spot that looked like the spouting of a whale. I used the soft point 30-40, and doubtless hit the jugular vein. As he stood there raised on his fore-flippers in the act of launching himself forward, his knotty hide full of big lumps and scars, he must have measured ten feet in height. The terrific shock of the bullet made him settle back and his head dropped to the ice. Seven huge walrus lay dead.

Every one seized a paddle and we sent the boat spinning to the ice floe, jumped out and pulled the omiak up. And just in time, for near us fifty or sixty heads arose out of the deep, spouting and snorting, then plunging and vanishing, only to come up again. Some of the Esquimaux took their harpoons and stationed themselves along the edge of the ice, while I took out the motion picture camera and began cranking at walrus and the Esquimaux impartially. Presently a wounded bull came near the edge of the ice and an Esquimau gave him the harpoon. The walrus dove and the rawhide began to spin out. All eight Esquimaux hung on the line, but soon were dragged to the edge of the ice, when one finally succeeded in snubbing the end around an ice cake. Everybody was watching with rifle ready for the walrus to come up for air. After two minutes up he came, but behind a small piece of ice and dove before being hit. The fourth or fifth time he was finally dispatched.

We had more meat than we could carry in our omiak, so I called I-tack with his two kyacks, placed my motion picture camera in them and left the rest to butcher the dead

walrus. I first took a picture of a dozen lying on an ice floe, then woke them up and got their pictures rushing for the water. Next I had I-tack crawl to another herd and show how an Esquimau hunts them on the ice. Then I placed the camera on an ice floe near a herd and showed the attack by boat. Running out of film, we returned to the ice floe, where the others had just finished butchering. Before loading the meat I asked Okback to paddle me to an enormous herd of about five hundred lying on an ice floe. We landed on a nearby floe and I crawled to within twenty feet of the foremost ranks. I had the camera covered with white cloth, but as soon as I raised the lens and began cranking the walrus noticed the motion and became restless. I had to freeze until they quieted down, then I took a few more feet of film, and so on until I had a perfect picture.

It was funny to see a big bull trying to get on the already over-burdened ice floe. They were lying so close that some of their tails were hanging over the edge. As the big bull hooked his tusks on the ice to lift himself those near the edge resented the intrusion and hacked at him with their tusks. He bent his head as if craving pardon and submission. When the rest were asleep he repeated the maneuver, each time gaining a few inches. Finally, the bull, after many a scrap, gained the ice and crowded among them. Near the center they were lying three deep.

No sooner had the skin boats left the floe than they were surrounded by an infuriated mob of walrus. The Esquimaux thrashed the sides of the boats with their paddles and imitated the grunts, but did not shoot, knowing it was mere walrus curiosity. All at once we saw a female walrus rise out of the water, thrusting her sharp, slender tusks high in air. This meant attack. We were too far to reach the nearest ice floe. Two Esquimaux reached for their spears, while I took the rifle. The next moment there came a hollow sound like the beating of a drum, then a crash. Arctic-toak's kyack rose in the air, throwing him on top of me and upsetting the tripod and camera. I grimly held to one of the legs of the tripod. We did not even see the walrus, let alone getting a spear thrust or a shot at it. She had bumped with her head on the underside of the kyack and ripped the frail skin boat wide open. It immediately filled, and the remaining kyack could just barely hold the weight of the three of us above water. I saw astern a tail, then the hind part of a walrus. It rose and came with a slap over the rear end of the kyack. We were a huddled and befuddled mass, floundering half in the water, but as the walrus slid over the end of the kyack her head came in sight. I stuck the muzzle of my rifle into her face and pulled the trigger. She scuttles no more kyacks.

Vengeance was not very sweet, for a \$1,500 camera lay at the bottom of the Arctic. As if the shot had been a signal to all the walrus, the next minute we were surrounded by a herd of them. We thrashed the water, snouted and paddled as best we could to the nearest floe. Here we patched up the rent in the kyack with our kamelinks while we were surrounded by bellowing walrus and kept prisoners for over an hour.

As our boats grated on the beach in front of the village we were greeted by the inhabitants with shouts of joy. This walrus meat meant a whole winter's supply for all the families of the men engaged in the hunt. Every igloo in the village was roasting walrus meat that night. Stories of the hunt were told, and Arctic-toak's wrinkled old mother came to our igloo, pressed my hand and said: "Illiconna-mig" ("Thank you").

MAXIMS OF MARTY McMAHON

By Robert B. Peck

"WILL ye tell me," demanded Marty McMahon, the retired bartender, "was there any bets up on this aeroplane that went eight miles or so up in the air?" An' will ye tell me if there wasn't no bets up, why should anybody be doin' such a thing?"

"From what I hear, the lad that was high man before come within half a mile or less of doin' eight miles straight up, an', to my mind, there's no great difference between bein' seven an' a half miles above Dayton, Ohio, an' bein' eight miles above it. Either way, you gotta change cars at Dayton before you go any place."

"Of course, I suppose, 'tis all fer science an' th' advancement of th' race, just like it used to be when they was huntin' fer the North Pole or the South Pole or swimmin' th' English Channel or goin' over Niagara Falls in a barrel or the likes of that."

"I ain't had no use fer either of them poles. My recollection is there didn't nobody so much

as buy a round of drinks at the old place on the strength o' their bein' found. It didn't do me no good an' it didn't do business no good an' it simply ruind Doc Cook. As for Niagara Falls, any fool can go over them, whether he's in a barrel or a bathin' suit. The trick is to keep from goin' over them."

"Now you take this fella that went up eight miles, or whatever it was—he was there, just like Peary an' the other lads was at their there, but he didn't do me no good an' he didn't do business no good, nor he wouldn't of if business was still legal."

"From what he said when he come down, there ain't much anybody can do eight miles up in the air only just use it as a place to come down from. He had to wear a woolen suit over his uniform an' then, over that, a

sort of Ku-Klux suit that was stuffed with feathers. An' he had to have a whole layout of oxygen tanks connected up with him so's he could breathe an' have his goggles gummed up with gelatine, so's his breath would freeze on 'em."

"All togged up like that an' fair gaspin' fer breath besides, a fella couldn't do no fightin' with his areaplane, he couldn't do no scoutin' an' he couldn't take no pictures. He couldn't do nothing except just be there. An' that's all the fellas could do that went to the North Pole an' the South Pole an' over Niagara Falls."

"The only way they'll ever get any good outa such stunts—and there'll always be some such stunts fer scientific purposes an' all so long's one young fella wants to get the

best of another young fella—is to make a sportin' proposition of 'em an' put up some money on the results."

"That'd be good fer business—or it would be if they hadn't made business illegal. There'd be a gang hangin' over the ticker an' half of 'em be buying a round of drinks every furlong the fella went up."

"Far's I could see from what the young fella said after he got back, there was just one scientific point that he proved, aside from provin' that he could fly his areaplane eight miles up in the air. He said that when he got up to 30,000 feet he couldn't think straight an' that he couldn't think straight from then on until he got back to 30,000 feet again."

"But that ain't so important. Everybody knows what you mean when you say a bird's up in the air. It don't add much if you talk precise and scientific an' say he's 30,000 feet up. Everybody knows you just mean he's up in the air an' can't think straight."